

Resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative of the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation, to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails, accepting the report of the Council of State Governments Justice Center on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Systems in Franklin County, and resolving to implement an improvement project, track results, and report on progress. (Commissioners)

WHEREAS, counties routinely provide treatment services to the estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses booked into jail each year, as evidenced in Franklin County where annually approximately 22,000 people account for nearly 32,000 bookings; and

WHEREAS, prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in jails are three to six times higher than for the general population, as evidenced in Franklin County where 22% of the jail population has a serious mental illness compared to 5% of the general population; and

WHEREAS, almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders, as evidenced in Franklin County where 68% of the jail population with a serious mental illness has a co-occurring alcohol and/or drug addiction; and

WHEREAS, adults with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and upon release are at a higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders, as evidenced in Franklin County where the average length of jail stay for persons with mental illness is 32 days compared to 20 days for those without mental illness; and

WHEREAS, county jails spend two to three times more on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions compared to those without these treatment needs; and

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals their families, and their communities; and

WHEREAS, county jails are not equipped to provide care and treatment to people with mental illness but have become *de facto*

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psychiatric hospitals, putting both inmates and officers at risk of serious injury or death; and

WHEREAS, Franklin County, like all counties, takes pride in our responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of our residents in efficient, safe, and socially just ways; and

WHEREAS, Franklin County has a strong commitment to reducing recidivism as evidenced by the work of the Franklin County Reentry Coalition and the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, through the *Stepping Up Initiative*, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation are encouraging counties to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in county jails; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

- 1.** That the Board of Commissioners does hereby sign on to the Call to Action to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our county jails, commit to sharing lessons learned with other counties in Ohio and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees and residents to participate in the *Stepping Up Initiative*; and
- 2.** That the Board of Commissioners has utilized resources available through the *Stepping Up Initiative* and other resources provided by the Council of State Governments Justice Center and has:
 - a. Convened and drawn on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely

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reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails, and

- b. Collected and reviewed prevalence numbers and assess needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and used that baseline information to guide decision making, and
 - c. Examined treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses, including those with co-occurring substance use disorders, and identified state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and services in the community, and
- 3.** That the Board of Commissioners hereby accepts the attached report of the Council of State Governments Justice Center on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Systems in Franklin County, and
- 4.** That the Board of Commissioners will continue to utilize the comprehensive resources available through the *Stepping Up Initiative* to:
- a. Develop a plan for 2016-2020, consistent with the Council of State Governments Justice Center report and recommendations, with measurable outcomes, that draws on the jail assessment data, the inventory of available treatment and service capacity, and policy and funding barriers, and
 - b. Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan, and

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- c. Encourage public private partnerships that promote awareness and enhance community safety through education, outreach, and destigmatization, and
 - d. Assign accountable staff and create processes to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes, and
- 5.** That the Board of Commissioners hereby encourages the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board to adopt as its highest priorities the issues of Criminal Justice & Behavioral Health Systems Improvement and Recidivism Reduction & Sustainable Reentry, and requests that the Criminal Justice Planning Board revise its Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan for a four-year period 2016-2020 and develop comprehensive strategies that focus on the priorities above, and submit that Plan to the Commissioners no later than 31 October 2015, and
- 6.** That the Board of Commissioners hereby instructs the Franklin County Reentry Coalition to revise its Comprehensive Strategic Plan for a four-year period 2016-2020 and develop comprehensive strategies that focus on and dovetail with the Criminal Justice Planning Board's Plan, and submit that Plan to the Commissioners no later than 15 December 2015.

Prepared by: Michael W. Daniels

CC: Council of State Governments Justice Center
Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board
Franklin County Reentry Coalition